

ISSUE 8

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2011

BROADSHEET



News Review from the
SCOTTISH COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES



Welcome to the Issue (number 8.)

Corpse brides, haunted hospitals and a phantom priest ... As our special Hallowe'en feature (pages 9 and 10) shows, archives have their fair share of ghostly tales and ghoulish myths. Not to be read alone, unless very brave! To settle your nerves, we also have *Broadsheet's* regular round up of news, events and interviews; including what to do should you find a Rudyard Kipling letter buried deep in your collection, and just how exactly is a 19th century Poor Law Inspector causing such a stir on 21st century social networks?

Please continue to get in touch with your news and activities from across Scotland and, as ever, thanks for reading.

Enjoy the Issue!

The Editorial Team

www.scoarch.org.uk



Glasgow City Archives

Glasgow Bridge, also known as Jamaica (Street) Bridge.
Designed by the Scottish civil engineer Thomas Telford and opened on 1st January, 1836.

Links:

www.glasgowlife.org.uk/libraries/the-mitchell-library/archives



THE NATION'S CATALOGUE: Report on SCAN-Scotland Online Project now available

As you might already be aware, SCAN Ltd. contributed funding for the Scottish Council on Archives to employ a consultant to take forward the next phase of the Scotland Online project. Readers may remember from last month's *Broadsheet* (Issue 7), that the current phase of the project is being led by Caroline Williams, a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Liverpool and an Independent Archival Consultant. Caroline has directed consultations, which included an online survey, and has now produced a report with recommendations for the final phase of the SCAN - Scotland Online project.

The SCA is pleased to announce that the phase two report is now available. You can access and download the report at www.scoarch.org.uk/projects/scotlandonlineproject

If you have any queries about the SCAN-Scotland Online Project, please contact the SCA office at info@scoarch.org.uk Further updates on the project will be posted on the SCA website in the coming months.

BRINGING THE POOR INSPECTOR BACK TO LIFE

Experiments in Social Media at West Lothian Archives



Emma updating the Twitter feed.

As a small yet perfectly formed repository, here at West Lothian Archives, we have to try and punch above our weight. That is to say, when promoting the materials stored here, we have to use slightly less traditional means. We decided to embrace a few of the many new ways of putting oneself about via the various social media sites. One of these, Twitter, allows the user to 'micro-blog', in other words to post (or Tweet) entries of up to 140 characters, add links to websites, blogs, pictures and more.

Inspired by West Riding ARP (@WR_ARP), a Twitter feed featuring 'live' air raid Tweets, we decided to post the daily records of the Poor Inspector for the Parish of West Calder, beginning in 1896. The Tweets are posted on the date to match the corresponding day in 1896, as though the good Inspector is sharing his daily case load. We also Tweet as if live from the monthly Parish Council meetings. At these meetings, final decisions were made on the cases brought forward from previous weeks, including whether the claimant is offered the poorhouse or monetary relief. The Tweets are based on records of applications, the poor roll itself and the parish council minutes. In terms of the comments that the inspector makes, although we do use a certain amount of artistic licence, these are firmly based on the decisions made by the parish council.

There was much debate when the project started about what sort of character our poor inspector would be. He started off as a fairly hostile character, but he has mel-

lowed over time and has moments of sympathy, if not empathy. We have enjoyed taking on his persona and seeing the world through his eyes. It will almost certainly be with a sense of loss that we say goodbye when the project finally ends.

So what effect has our experiment in social media had on our service? I would love to say that we've had hordes of researchers fighting their way in to our search room to see the poor law records, but that hasn't happened. We have, however, raised our profile within West Lothian Council, the local community and the heritage sector in general. Plus we now have lots of ideas for how we can use social media in the future to connect with new audiences. Perhaps the best outcome has been raising of awareness of our poor law records.

The joy of presenting documents in this fashion is that not only does it infuse the documents with personality and humanity - after all archives are of the people - but it also involves enjoying the challenge of sharing your work and materials in innovative ways to new groups of people all over the world. In doing so, it might also make you, as it has for us here, look at your collections in a new light.

by **Emma Peattie** and
Stephen Thomas
West Lothian Archives



Many applicants ended up in the Linlithgow Combination Poorhouse. This image from the 1950s post-dates the building's operation as a poorhouse.

An extract from the Record of Applications; Richard Porteous' wife applies for her husband to be sent to the asylum. Rather bizarrely, she also makes an application for their daughter and both are sent to the asylum on the same day.

Parish of West Calder
 Date and Hour of Application 14 August 1890 10 AM
 Date and Hour of Inspector's first Visit 14 August 1890 3 PM
 Applicant's Name Richard Porteous
 Residence Northmuir Rent, £
 Application made by his wife
 Age 55 Religion—Protestant or Roman Catholic Protestant
 Applicant's Occupation Quarryman Average Earnings brought home for 2000 No.
 Names of Dependents and Children living with Applicant, and Ages and Earnings.
Wife Christina Clark 61 Born Shotts (Auchincloss)
Isabella 23 Born Westley (Cunatit)
 Names of Children not living with Applicant—Ages—Residences—and Earnings.
Marion Married to John Robert Butcher
23 Hutchison St Glasgow St
 Applicant's Country of Birth—English, Irish, Foreign—or Parish if in Scotland West Calder
 Condition—Married—Single—Widow—Widower—Orphan—Deserted—Separated Married
 Disablement (Wholly or Partially) Emaciated Destitute (Wholly or Partially) (Shots 1870)
 Names of Parents, and circumstances if alive John Porteous Carver
Isabella Hooper both dead. Wife Parents James
Clark Porteous. Maria Hamilton both dead
 Length of Residence in present House and of previous Residences—Settlement—Parishes claimed against, &c.
 Reference to previous Applications, if any.
 Inspector's Decision and Date 15 Aug Removed to Asylum
 Parish Council's Decision and Date 8th To be maintained ad lib
 If Refused, Ground of Refusal.
 If Admitted to Relief, Folio of General Register of Poor.

A word from the Poor Inspector...

Greetings readers. My name is Alexander Smith and I serve as Poor Inspector for the parish of West Calder. I am responsible for the allocation and distribution of outdoor relief to paupers in this parish. I encounter many poor souls whose fortunes have so rapidly turned. Only two months ago I dealt with a man of the name George Reid. He had served as a soldier in the 1st Royal Scots, but the poor fellow was injured on duty and discharged on medical grounds. He did his best to work but was simply not able - it is right that this man be afforded the relief of the parish. I also see young widows, often with many children, left with nothing when their husbands perish in the pits. I am glad that the parish can help these poor souls.

Whilst I do consider myself to be of kind heart, one must not be overwhelmed by emotion. The parish council is not a charitable institution after all, and a distinction must be made between the deserving and the undeserving poor. Some paupers clearly do themselves no favours, acting in a manner that will undoubtedly lead to a life of destitution. Indeed, I often encounter women whose ridiculous notions of a happy marriage lead them to leave their husbands, soon after finding themselves at my office attempting to claim relief! The parish cannot be expected to pay the price for a pauper's poor judgements and moral failings and it is right that these cases be sent to the poor house. I must sign off now; another applicant has just called into my office...

12 October 1896

Now that you've read about the project, please follow (and Retweet!) the Poor Inspector. West Lothian Archives are also Tweeting the diary of Private Peter Jack of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry during the WWI campaign in Gallipoli and Egypt.

www.twitter/PoorInspector

www.twitter.com/PteJack

CONSERVATION the bench



Upper Clyde Shipbuilding Glass Plate Preservation Project

The firm of James and George Thomson was founded in 1847 as the Clyde Bank Foundry at Finnieston Street, Govan, became the Clyde Bank Iron Shipyard at Cessnock Bank, Govan in 1851 and moved in 1871 to Clydebank. In 1897 control passed to the Clydebank Engineering and Shipbuilding Co Ltd and in 1899 the yard was acquired by John Brown and Co Ltd.

When Upper Clyde Shipbuilding (UCS) was liquidated in 1972, the liquidator agreed to sell the historical records to four public bodies, with half the cost being paid by the Scottish Record Office (SRO), and that ownership of the records should be vested in the Keeper of the Records of Scotland. The collection includes large amounts of glass plate negatives, cellulose acetate negatives, and photographic prints and albums.

I was part of the original project team of conservators recruited in 2003 to start Phase 1 of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilding Preservation Project. The glass plate negatives from the collection were cleaned, condition assessed and rehoused in conservation quality enclosures and stored in the new steel cabinet drawers installed in the photographic store. Phase 2, the work on the cellulose acetate negatives from the collection, is still in progress. Around 20,000 negatives are being assessed, documented and repackaged prior to their removal to upgraded cold storage in spark proof freezers. Unfortunately, a significant part of this collection is degraded and exhibits 'vinegar syndrome' – when the plastic support shrinks, causing the emulsion layer to separate from it and creating channels and bubbles.

While working on the photographic items, we realised that making the collection accessible was essential in order to complete the preservation project. The department invested resources in staff training and equipment, including a professional photographic scanner and a dedicated computer. Now a programme to make images accessible to the public is underway. The project has also provided the opportunity to work with a variety of different professionals, including model makers and other researchers outside the conservation department.

This collection is not only visually stunning, filled with powerful and striking images, but it also forms a social record of historical import which documents the activities of one of the world's preeminent shipbuilding centres. Some of the most famous ships built in the shipyard are HMS Hood, HMS Repulse, RMS Lusitania and RMS Queen Mary.

Eva Martinez Moya

Collections Conservator, National Records of Scotland

INTERVIEW

François Doussau, Trainee Archivist



The National Records of Scotland (NRS) has been welcoming trainee archivists from the French archive training schools, the *École Nationale des Chartes* and the *Institut National du Patrimoine*, since the early 1990s. Students generally take up placements for a period of between four and eight weeks for some practical experience, and to learn how archives in Scotland are organised. Students meet colleagues working in all areas of the NRS, as well as visiting other archive services and related organisations.

Describe archives in three words.

Histoire (History). Vie (Life – life of a person, a community or a nation). Poussière (Dust).

What made you decide to become a professional archivist?

I have always been interested in history, particularly in the ‘materials’ of history – objects, documents, records – the things that contain *vie*, the life of a person, a community or a nation.

I don’t think this passion for history will ever go away, however your question comes at quite an important time for me as my goals and focus have recently changed. For me, the next step does not involve pursuing a career as an archivist. I intend to enrol in military school at the *École Spéciale Militaire de Saint-Cyr*, a military training academy in France. My reasons for this decision are varied, but, I worry about the competitive nature of the sector in France and the lack of job opportunities. I realise this seems like an extreme move!

What kind of education and training do you have to undertake in France? How long, on average, does it take for you to complete your training?

I am currently studying at the *École Nationale des Chartes* which specialises in the training of library professionals and archivists. Basic study lasts for three years and involves a diverse combination of courses and internships ranging from palaeography to law. The reason for such a wide range of subjects is to develop a critical understanding and awareness of the documents and records encountered by a professional archivist.

However, in addition to the three year diploma, there is the need for some preliminary training to prepare candidates for the *École des Chartes* application process. In my case, this took two years. It is extremely competitive with an average of about 20 places available each year. And of course the training

and education doesn’t stop with the completion of the diploma – it takes about seven years before you can call yourself an archivist or consider applying for positions.

What sort of things have you been doing during your time at the NRS?

As well as spending time within various departments of NRS, including the search rooms, digitisation unit, conservation and outreach, I have also been helping to catalogue a collection of papers relating to the Campbell family of Achalader. The papers include various estate records from the eighteenth century, and there is also a range of fascinating correspondence relating to political events such as the Jacobite Rising and the wars in Europe.

Did you notice any significant differences in how you would catalogue a collection in France, and how you found your project here? For example, do you generally use ISAD-G or similar cataloguing standards in France?

No significant distinctions really. Although the software in France has different names, it is very similar to CALM and we catalogue in line with ISAD-G standards.

Do you think that the history of France, particularly the state decrees and laws concerning archives which were passed during the 1790s, have influenced how archives there are perceived, i.e. in your opinion, do you think the average French citizen thinks archives are ‘important’ or that they play a role in protecting rights and freedoms?

Unfortunately, the situation in France is quite similar to the UK and archivists are facing the same problems and struggles. Although genealogical research continues to grow in popularity, the work of archivists and records managers is not very well known amongst the general public. Although

there are occasional high-profile exhibitions, public awareness is very low and there are no official outreach officers or education programmes. Having said this, the sector in France is very aware of the need to engage with people and very willing to explore possibilities – it just seems that the magic solution remains elusive!

Another issue is the highly competitive nature of the sector. Generally speaking, archivists’ jobs are well protected (which is of course a good thing!), however this can also lead to the alienation of younger generations interested in training as archivists. They can find that their paths are currently blocked due to a lack of job opportunities.

What do you think are some of the key issues or challenges facing the archival sector in France today?

As well as the problems with outreach and jobs, there is an ever declining body of users. Yes, genealogy is growing, but history researchers are becoming fewer and fewer – particularly amongst the younger population.

Of course there is also the issue of technology and the challenges surrounding the preservation of electronic records. The way forward in this area still seems worryingly uncertain.

SHOWCASE

School of Scottish Studies



2011 marks the 60th anniversary of the School of Scottish Studies, set up in 1951 at the University of Edinburgh to collect, archive, research and publish material relating to the folklore and folk-life of Scotland. There are now thousands of recordings in the Sound Archive including songs, music, tales, rhymes, sayings, biographical information and local histories of the people and communities of Scotland. The Photographic Archive, comprising over 20,000 images, includes the fieldwork of in-house photographers as well as donated collections. The Archives are complemented by a small manuscript collection and an extensive library of ethnographic publications, both Scottish and international.

Early fieldworkers focused on 'rescue ethnology', recording traditions and ways of life that were believed to be on the verge of disappearing, and the archives contain valuable information on the lives of crofters and farm servants, the agricultural year, fishing, food gathering and preparation, house construction, boats, traditional medicine, religion, weather lore, place-names, lifecycle and seasonal customs. More re-

cently, contemporary life has been documented and issues such as identity and heritage have been investigated along with tenement life, the folk revival and industry. Students from Celtic and Scottish Studies learn fieldwork techniques as part of their degree and contribute their own recordings.

The archives are a rich resource for those interested in the traditional arts. The large collection of Scots and Gaelic songs range from waulking songs and puirt-a-beul (mouth music) to muckle ballads, love songs and lullabies. Instrumental music includes a particularly rich repertoire of piping and fiddle music as well as jaw harp, ceilidh and dance bands. Many of the recordings contain tales and stories, some of which originated centuries ago and have been passed down from generation to generation. There are accounts of historical events and clan battles as well as legends of supernatural encounters and witchcraft. In recent years, the archives have hosted a Traditional-Artist-in-Residence scheme with participants including Adam McNaughtan, Patsy Seddon, Margaret Callan, Allan MacDonald and, this year, Jean Redpath.

Material comes from all over Scotland and its diaspora and, as well as being a rich repository of oral tradition, the archives are invaluable for the range of dialects of Gaelic, Scots and English which can be heard on the recordings. These voices give a glimpse into different lives and ways of being, enabling us to dip into types of knowledge and expression that are not easily conveyed through the written record.

Publications include the *Scottish Traditions* series of CDs (Greentrax) and *Tocher*, the archive journal, which contains transcriptions (with translations) from the recordings. Much of the fieldwork has been digitised and a selection is available to listen to on-line at www.kistoriches.co.uk.

Visitors to the archives include relations of individuals on the recordings, students, teachers, international scholars, local historians, singers, musicians and storytellers. As part of the celebrations to mark the 60th anniversary, three artists/musicians – Aileen Campbell, Alasdair Roberts and Drew Wright – are making their own Archive Trails, seeking inspiration for new works which they are touring round Scotland this Autumn. Follow them on www.archivetrails.com

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GALA CONCERT

12 November 8pm—Pleasance Theatre, Edinburgh
Celebrating 60 Years of the School of Scottish Studies, with staff and students from the School and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

www.carryingstreamfestival.co.uk/csf11.htm



SCOTTISH STUDIES AND ARCHIVES

by Gerry Slater, SCA Policy Adviser

On 29 September, the Scottish Parliament debated an issue significant for the future of primary and secondary education and beyond, namely the introduction of 'Scottish Studies' into the curriculum. The debate involved some party point scoring, but it was also one that showed the Parliament at its best when considering a subject of such tremendous importance.

There was disagreement over whether having separately labelled 'Scottish Studies' would be a help or a hindrance in advancing the understanding of what has made the nation. The debate ranged across many aspects of Scotland's culture, and it was recognised that history should be taught 'warts and all' (for example, no evading the role in slavery).

So what had the debate to do with archives? To use a certain TV advertisement's catch word, 'Simples'. To every subject mentioned during the debate archives could make a significant contribution, which is not surprising since they are the 'documented national memory'. It is a memory that captures the trials and successes of the nation and the communities and peoples that together have made the nation and moulded its position in the world.

The Minister for Learning and Skills, Dr Alasdair Allan, declared that 'Understanding Scottish culture and connecting with Scotland as a place through our landscape and natural heritage are an important part of developing a sense of worth, confidence and wellbeing—all the things that enable people to flourish in learning, life and work.' There might be disagreement about the means of achieving that purpose, but the other speakers supported the fundamental proposition.

Whatever their differences, all the speakers shared a common purpose, namely furthering knowledge and understanding of Scotland and its people among those benefitting from education in Scotland. The Highlands and Islands MSP Jean Urquhart clearly saw a role for archives:

"The Parliament supports a great many organisations and agencies that are trusted with much of the nation's wealth, all of which have—or should have—educational programmes... An impressive brochure from the Scottish Council on Archives, which is one of those organisations, landed in our mailboxes only this week. Sally Magnusson says in that brochure's foreword: "Our archives are our national memory. They show us the forging of the Scottish nation over the centuries and open a window on its contacts with other peoples and cultures."

...Children and young people have the right to know about all those agencies and to take advantage of them, but everything cannot be left to the teachers and other experts in their respective fields. The new study should deliver a message for us all to better understand the different aspects of Scottish life. All of us have much to learn; ignorance is not bliss."

The Minister chairs the Scottish Studies Working Group, which is due to report early next year. Archivists should be ready to look at that report. We all need to consider further how we can better contribute to advancing knowledge of Scotland in all its diversity and richness. The Scottish Council on Archives is already looking at how it can make a visible and measurable difference in furthering the use of archives in schools. There are exciting times ahead.

Scotland's Archives Matter is available from the SCA website at

www.scoarch.org.uk/projects/scotlandsarchivesmatter



Debating Chamber
©2009 Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body

The Phantom Priest

Leonie Paterson, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh Archive

The RBGE archive holds the collections of Scottish plant hunter George Forrest. In 1905, whilst in China near the border with Tibet, Forrest, along with two French priests and their followers, were ambushed and hunted along the Mekong River by a group rebelling against the Chinese and Europeans in the area. Most lost their lives in the attack, but Forrest escaped by hiding in a river bed. After eight days with no food, he made a dash to a village who took him in and managed to smuggle him to safety.

Forrest had reportedly seen a luminous vision of one of the murdered French priests. He never wrote his ghost story down, but apparently he did tell people as it is published in a book held within the collection at the RBGE. It records that "Forrest was hiding amid the scrub of the stream when he saw a group of his pursuers ... he was considering how to pick them off one by one with his rifle when something else attracted his attention. It seemed to be the figure of Pere Dubernard farther up the hillside waving him to proceed down the stream. This he did and so escaped ... but the wonder was that the Reverend Father had been slaughtered three days before."

Murder Most Horrid

Amanda Noble, Lloyds Banking Group Archives (British Linen Bank minutes)

On 13th November 1806 a horrible murder and robbery was committed in Edinburgh that remains unsolved to this day. The victim, William Begbie, was a porter at the Leith branch of the British Linen Bank. His body was discovered in the dark close leading to the Bank's Head Office at Tweeddale Court. Begbie had been stabbed through the heart with a common bread knife, sharpened to a point.

The crime caused a sensation in Edinburgh. Despite a reward of 500 guineas offered by the Bank, the murderer was never caught, and speculation continued for years as to the identity of the culprit. Sir Walter Scott wrote about the case on several occasions, while Robert Louis Stevenson featured it in his *Edinburgh – Picturesque Notes*, alongside the ghastly tale of Burke and Hare. Beware when you enter Tweeddale court today – Begbie's ghost is said to still haunt the dark, narrow passage, awaiting justice!



Zombies in the Churchyard

Ruaraidh Wishart
Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives

24 September 1794 - "Whereas a practice has prevailed of burying the corps of dead persons in the Church yeard of Inverbervie so near the surface that pernicious consequences may be p[er]ceived to the Living from the efluvia of the putrefying dead bodies so buried in Graves not made sufficiently deep; And whereas it is contrary to decency to see the bones of our ancestors buried so near the surface of the Ground and so easily turned up; Therefore to put a stop in future to an evil so justly alarming and to remove a practice which is in itself indecent The Magistrates and Council of said Burgh of Inverbervie Do Hereby Enact That in future all Graves made in the Church Yeard of Inverbervie shall be at least five feet deep from the surface of the ground to the bottom of the grave..."

Debilis et fortis Veniunt ad funera Mortis iunt ad f

Est commune mori, Moris nulli parcat honor, Moris nulli parcat honor

‡ BURWASH
 ††††† ETCHINGHAM

BATEMAN'S
 BURWASH
 SUSSEX

Nov. 20. 1909

Dear Osler

Macphail is coming to
 stay with us for a few days
 exactly on his arrival from Canada.
 I'll do my best to send him up
 to the Athenaeum dinner in good
 and proper order though I fear that
 myself I shall be able to attend
 on the 13th

Yr sincerely
 Rudyard Kipling

AND FINALLY...

...If you should find a Kipling letter in your archive, 'keep your head when all about you are losing theirs'

A recent discovery in the Archives of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh has caused a stir. Alison Scott, the archivist for the Wellcome Trust funded project to catalogue the College's archival holdings, was more used to finding 18th century doctor's letters. Imagine her surprise when an envelope described in the existing manuscripts catalogue as 'A letter accompanying 'The Life of Sir William Osler' turned out to be four letters and one of them was from Kipling!

The letter, dated 20th November 1909, was written by Kipling from Bateman's, the house he bought in 1902 near the village of Burwash in the Sussex Downs. It is an interesting feature of his headed notepaper that it indicates the nearest telegraph office (Burwash) and the nearest train station (Etchingham).

The letter is addressed to Sir William Osler, a Canadian physician and pathologist and later Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford University. They may have met originally because Osler's wife was a distant cousin of Mrs Kipling, but they became friends, and Osler is credited with much of Kipling's interest in medical history.

The letter refers to Macphail coming to stay with the Kiplings. This was probably Sir Andrew Macphail, Professor of Medical History at McGill University (Montreal, Canada). Unfortunately, it is not known what the occasion was at the Athenaeum that Macphail and Osler (but not Kipling) were to attend. If anyone can let us know we'd be very interested to hear.

There is also some mystery around the provenance of the letter. Although it probably came into the Archives via Harvey Cushing's 'The Life of Sir William Osler', that does not explain how Cushing came to have it. Cushing was a great admirer of Kipling and corresponded with him himself. He may have found the letter while writing Osler's biography and simply kept it.

A SCOTTISH COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES PUBLICATION

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